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## ABSTRACT

The statement presents a consensus of what South Carolina educators expect children to know and be able to do in foreign languages, and the changes needed in the educational system to support what teachers and students do in the classroom. It is not a curriculum guide, but is intended for use by policymakers, instructional leaders, teachers, and communities as a broad instructional design for improvement of the educational system. The first section looks at the rationale for foreign language instruction, including economic, cultural, and intellectual reasons, enrollment trends, and directions for the future. The second section outlines a systematic approach to change, offers guidelines for designing an effective program, describes different program models, and discusses the choice of languages to teach. Alternatives to full-scale, self-contained foreign language programs are examined in the third section, and recommendations are made for improvement in teacher certification, professional development, and student opportunities. Section four addresses the need for assessment and evaluation and outlines performance objectives for language skill areas at the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels. Specific classroom techniques are discussed in the fifth section, and criteria for selection of instructional materials in the sixth. Contains 30 references. (MSE)

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## SOUTH CAROLINA



# Foreign Languages

## FRAMEWORK

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# **South Carolina**

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# **Foreign**

# **Languages**

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# **F r a m e w o r k**

*Developed by the*  
South Carolina Foreign Languages  
Curriculum Framework Writing Team

*Adopted by the*  
South Carolina State Board of Education  
November 1993

Barbara S. Nielsen, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education  
South Carolina Department of Education  
Columbia, South Carolina

***For further information regarding South Carolina Curriculum Frameworks,  
please write:***

South Carolina State Department of Education  
Curriculum Framework Office  
1429 Senate Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

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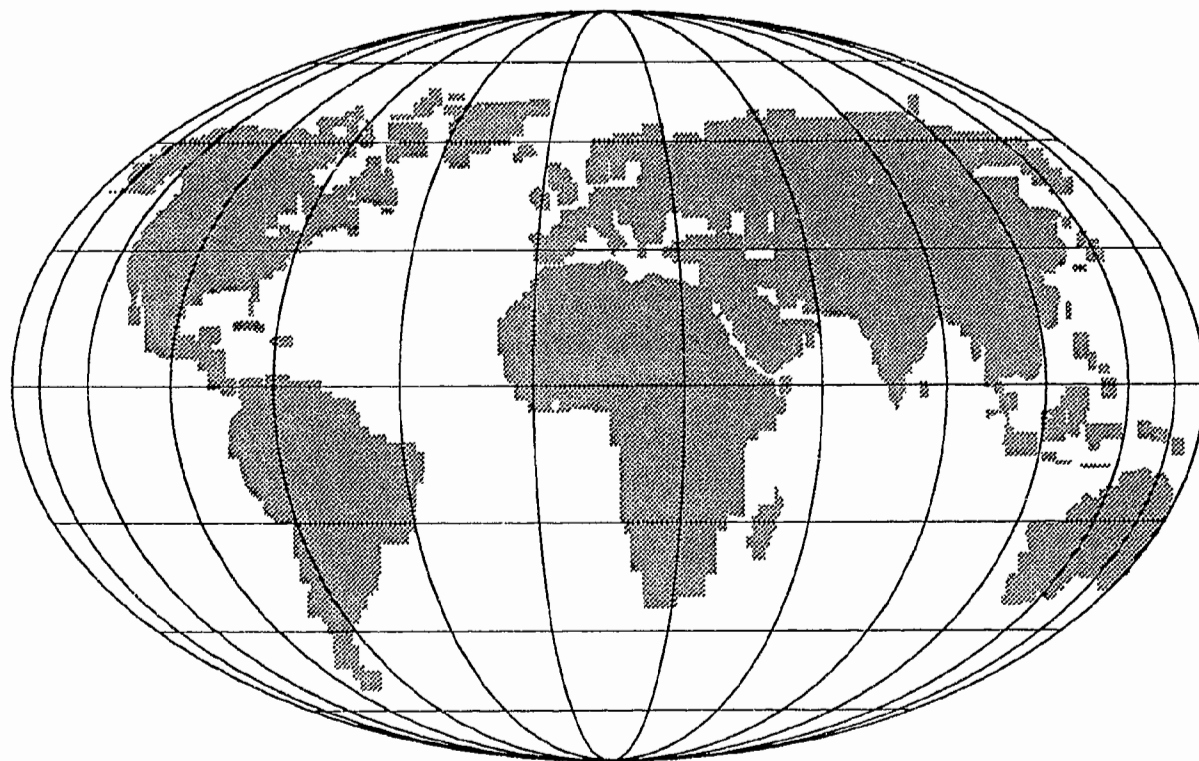
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## South Carolina Foreign Languages Framework



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## **Foreign Languages Curriculum Framework Writing Team**

---

Dr. Clementina Adams, *Clemson University*  
Olga Burtnett, *Spartanburg High School, Spartanburg County School District Seven*  
Dr. Luana Coleman, *Lexington High School, Lexington School District One*  
Josette Grimsley, *Beaufort High School, Beaufort County Schools*  
Keith Guess, *DuBose Middle School, Dorchester School District Two*  
Bonner Guidera, *Conway High School, Horry County Schools*  
Dr. Joe James, *Francis Marion University*  
Karel Keel, *Spring Valley High School, Richland School District Two*  
Judy Langston, *Lancaster High School, Lancaster County Schools; USC-Lancaster*  
Dr. Sharon McCullough, *Spartanburg County School District Seven*  
Dr. Arthur Mosher, Chair, *University of South Carolina*  
Dr. Bill Prince, *Furman University*  
Dr. Alfredo Sharpe, *South Carolina State University*  
Dr. Takeyuki Ueyama, *University of South Carolina*  
Dotti Priddy, Writer/editor

## **State Department of Education Facilitators**

---

Cindy Saylor, *Education Associate, Office of Technical Assistance*  
Dr. Dennis Bartels, *Special Assistant, Division of Development*  
Dr. Jim Casteel, *Education Associate, Curriculum Framework Office*  
Dr. Andrea S. Keim, *Education Associate, Curriculum Framework Office*  
Phyllis Hoover, *Administrative Assistant, Curriculum Framework Office*

---

### **South Carolina Curriculum Review Panel**

---

Dr. Kay Creamer, Chair, *Chester Middle School, School District of Chester County*  
Carolyn Dawkins, *Mary Wright Elementary School, Spartanburg County School District Seven*  
Barry Goldsmith, *Charleston County School District*  
Sharon K. Gray, *Irmo Middle School – Campus I, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties*  
Dr. Albertha S. Krakue, *Claflin College*  
Lillie G. Lewis, *Tanglewood Middle School, School District of Greenville County*  
Dr. Deborah Miller, *College of Charleston*  
James Price, *Rice Creek Elementary School, Richland School District Two*  
Janet Sanner, *Berkeley County School District*  
Pat Scales, *Greenville Middle School, School District of Greenville County*  
Dr. Dennis Wiseman, *Coastal Carolina University*

### **Curriculum Review Panel Foreign Languages Subcommittee**

---

Dr. Albertha Krakue, *Claflin College*  
Lillie Lewis, *Tanglewood Middle School, School District of Greenville County*  
Dr. Pamela Isacco Niesslein, *College of Charleston*  
Wayne Radcliffe, *Hartsville Senior High School, Darlington School District*  
Danny Wilson, *Socastee High School, Horry County School District*



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## Foreword

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Dear South Carolinians:

On November 10, 1993 the State Board of Education adopted the first three frameworks in Foreign Languages, Mathematics, and the Visual and Performing Arts to guide policy and practice throughout the state's education system. The learning standards outlined in the South Carolina Foreign Languages Framework are the result of over a year's discussion in which thousands of South Carolinians took part. After the dedicated teachers, higher education faculty members, and community members had written, reviewed and come to consensus about what we want students to know and be able to do in Foreign Languages, we proudly presented this framework to the State Board of Education for their adoption. Whether you are a student, parent, school staff, an administrator, a local business person, or a concerned community member, you can feel very excited about the accomplishments which this framework represents.

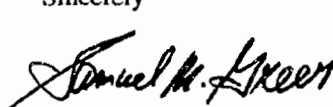
Now that we have a framework in place, the real work begins for the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education and all South Carolinians. That work is to carefully review the entire system of education against the recommendations in this framework and to propose and support changes in that system that can translate the South Carolina Foreign Languages framework into classroom practice. We believe that all students can learn at high levels. The three frameworks already adopted and those under development in Science, English Language Arts, Health and Safety, Social Studies, and Physical Education will serve as the guides to enable the system of education in our great state to deliver on that belief. We salute all of you for your involvement and dedication to that goal.

Sincerely,



Barbara Stock Nielsen, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

Sincerely



Samuel M. Greer, Ed.D.  
Chairman, State Board of  
Education

## Preface

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The *South Carolina Foreign Languages Framework* presents a statewide consensus of what we expect children to know and be able to do in foreign languages and the changes necessary in the education system to support what teachers and students do every day in the classroom. The framework challenges all of us to provide foreign language programs for every student, not just a select few; to begin foreign language programs at the earliest time possible in a child's education and continue uninterrupted through high school; and to ensure that foreign language instruction is communication-based.

This framework is not a program or curriculum guide, but is intended to be used by policymakers, instructional leaders, teachers and communities as a broad instructional design for continuous improvement of the education system. The framework can serve as a common reference point to ensure that all components of the education system work together and reinforce the same vision of instructional excellence in our classrooms.

The planning for this framework, which was shaped over two years, began with the appointment of a writing team of teachers, administrators, and post-secondary faculty who have either written, taught, or lectured in the discipline area. This team made fundamental decisions regarding the basic tenets for foreign languages, student performance standards, how students learn and different ways to teach, instructional materials, and what parts of the system must change to support this vision. The team drew from the expertise and reports provided by the South Carolina Curriculum Congress and existing national and state documents including the *Education Study: "What Work Requires of Schools"* from the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce. The initial draft framework was distributed to districts, schools, county libraries, members of the business community, parents, and colleges and universities for extensive public review and comment. Final revisions to the document were made based on the results of the field review process and the framework was submitted to the State Board of Education for adoption.

Following State Board adoption, the frameworks will guide the State Department of Education and others responsible for the

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quality of foreign language education in South Carolina to pursue the policy and program changes advocated in the framework. No policy or program changes are automatically in effect as the result of the adoption of this framework. Many types of changes recommended in this framework will require formal approval of regulatory or statutory changes or are a matter of local authority requiring action or approval of school districts or local school boards. We urge all who have a stake in South Carolina education to use it in shaping their policies, programs, planning, budgets, and personnel decisions.

The changes outlined in the framework will take time and all the instructional goals cannot be met overnight, within a few months, or even a few years. These changes will require thoughtful discussion and the necessary support in place, such as the provision of professional development and instructional materials that support the type of instruction program that schools and communities want for their children.

The planning document *Using Curriculum Frameworks for Systemic Reform* provides a State Department of Education response to support this framework and represents a point of departure for statewide discussion and joint planning. Policy changes at the state level may include instructional materials selection, assessment, school accreditation, teacher certification/recertification, and professional development.

This framework appropriately and accurately describes the foreign language programs that should be established in our schools. We know what is required. Now we must move forward, each responding at our own pace, but all moving in concert to make the promise of the framework a reality for all students.

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# I. Why Foreign Languages?

- *Economic and cultural reasons for studying foreign languages*
- *Intellectual reasons for studying foreign languages*
- *Where we are and where we're going in foreign language education*
- *A vision for the 1990s and beyond*

**A** Columbia-based computer software company has offices in Canada, England, France, Germany, Spain, Norway and Australia. Greenville is home to a Japanese cultural center, where the staff is multi-lingual and the clientele is international. A French sailboat company advertises for a mechanical engineer to fill a position in Marion, S.C. "French is a plus," the ad says. And German automaker BMW is building an assembly plant in Spartanburg County.

The economy of the 1990s is a global economy and South Carolina is playing its part. More than 450 businesses in the state have at least partial foreign ownership, according to South Carolina State Development Board statistics. A total of 26 foreign countries have financial interests here. Foreign-affiliated capital investments in South Carolina for 1992 alone amounted to a record \$1.39 billion (48.5 percent of total investments for the year) and were responsible for the creation of 5,085 jobs (33 percent of all new jobs for the year).

"Foreign investment in South Carolina has grown dramatically in recent years," according to a 1991 business report by KPMG Peat Marwick, an international accounting firm with an office in Greenville. "It is a significant and vital part of the state economy."

And these figures are only part of the story. They tell us nothing of the growing number of locally owned businesses entering foreign markets, of the increasing numbers of foreign citizens moving to South Carolina, of the importance of foreign travelers to the state's tourist industry, or of expanding international job opportunities for our young people outside the state.

It is time for education in South Carolina to recognize and respond to these changing economic and social realities. It is the responsibility of the state's education system to prepare students to compete in an increasingly international job market and to live in an increasingly diverse world.

To be successful, South Carolinians must approach the 21st century with expanded cultural horizons and increased

## Countries with investments in South Carolina

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Venezuela

Source: South Carolina State Development Board, *South Carolina Establishments With Foreign Affiliations -- By Country* (1993).

communication skills. A logical place to start in meeting this challenge is to increase foreign language instruction in our schools.

### Economic and cultural reasons for studying foreign languages

#### A key called language

"Language is a key to opening minds and attitudes. To speak, read, write, and understand another language is the beginning of understanding other people." (p. 49)

"If we believe we can effectively trade, provide political leadership, keep on top of scientific developments, and share the benefits of the cultural growth of the rest of the world in our island of English, we fool only ourselves." (p. 76)

Paul Simon, *The Tongue-Tied American* (1980).



The push for increased foreign language education in American public schools has been gaining momentum since the 1970s and has come from education, business and government sources. Some examples:

- In 1975, the United States was one of 35 nations to sign the Helsinki Accords, a treaty calling for participating countries "to encourage the study of foreign languages and civilizations as an important means of expanding communication among peoples."

- A 1979 report, *Strength through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability*, prepared by the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, concluded: "Americans' incompetence in foreign languages is nothing short of scandalous...our lack of foreign language competence diminishes our capabilities in diplomacy, in foreign trade, and in citizen comprehension of the world in which we live and compete." (pp. 5-6)

- In 1980, then-Congressman Paul Simon published a book called *The Tongue-Tied American: Confronting the Foreign Language Crisis*, in which he linked trade deficits, national security weaknesses and cultural isolation to America's "language gap."

- The National Advisory Board on International Education Programs, in a 1983 report titled *Critical Needs in International Education: Recommendations for Action*, warned: "Because of our lack of competence in foreign languages, American business stands to lose markets to foreign competition." (p. 5)

- The National Commission on Excellence in Education in its 1983 report, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, called for foreign language education beginning in the elementary grades. "Study of a foreign language introduces students to non-English-speaking cultures, heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue, and serves the Nation's needs in commerce, diplomacy, defense, and education." (p. 26)

Today, the need for foreign language education is more urgent than ever. Dr. Jeffrey Arpan, director of the nationally acclaimed International Business Programs at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, wrote in the spring 1992 issue of the *International Society for Business Education Newsletter*:

Education that is NOT international in context, example, and experience is incomplete, irrelevant to today's world and inexcusably myopic. It is even potentially dangerous. From pre-school through college school curricula should be internationally oriented and of world quality standard...

More job opportunities exist globally than domestically, and hence there are more opportunities for persons with international education, experience, skills, and mindsets. For example, business persons bilingual in Spanish and English have dozens of countries in which employment is possible, and are able to transact business with people in even more countries who speak either English or Spanish. (pp. 1-2)

USC's Master of International Business Studies (MIBS) program requires its American students to live six months in a foreign country and to become proficient in that country's language. "Only through language training are business students fully sensitized to a culturally diverse economy," according to the MIBS brochure.

But you don't have to leave the country or work for a multinational corporation to need a second language. "There's an advantage to being multilingual in the United States even if you're not in international business," says Dr. Arpan. As American society becomes more culturally diverse, so does the work force — and the plant manager or personnel manager who can communicate in more than one language has an advantage. Proficiency in a second language can also benefit people entering careers such as science, law, the tourism industry, advertising, and social services.

More and more workers in technical jobs need foreign language skills, too. "You can put dollars and cents to time lost on the plant floor when two technicians can't communicate in a common language," according to Christian Tetsch, MIBS associate director. Money is also lost when translators have to be hired to transcribe manuals and correspondence written in other languages.

An International Education Task Force established in 1989 by Greenville Technical College surveyed Greenville-area businesses and discovered that 60 percent of respondents had foreign employees, 85 percent had employees traveling abroad and 95 percent entertained visitors from foreign countries. Not surprisingly, 80 percent said they wanted Greenville Tech to increase its foreign language offerings. As a result, the school has expanded programs in Spanish, French, German, Russian and Japanese.

Most of the state's 16 technical colleges, in fact, offer

### A subtle indicator

"Keeping prices competitive may land U.S. businesses foreign contracts, but when prices are close, other much more subtle indicators come into play. Business people's knowledge of the country and language they are dealing with can put them over the top. Also, cheap prices may give business people an initial contract abroad, but communications problems between the buyer and seller can wind up souring future business deals."

Myriam Marquez, "Speak their language to bridge trade barrier," *The State*, 1-12-92, p. 3D. (First published in *The Orlando Sentinel*, 1-6-92, p. A8.)

### Advertising flub

"Nike, the shoe company, has come out with a television commercial for hiking shoes that was shot in Kenya using Samburu tribesmen. It combines broad shots of brightly clad, dancing men and women, and close-ups of the colorful new boots. There are no words until the very end. Then the camera closes in on the one tribesman who speaks, in native Maa. As he speaks, the Nike slogan, 'Just do it,' appears on the screen.

"Problem. Lee Cronk, an anthropologist at the University of Cincinnati, says the Kenyan is really saying: 'I don't want these. Give me big shoes.' Nike admits its film crew improvised after having trouble getting a Maa version of the slogan. But, says Nike's Elizabeth Dolan, 'we thought nobody in America would know what he said.'

"Just do what?"

*The New York Times*, 2-15-89, p. A26.

foreign language courses. "Foreign language in high school is not an entry requirement to a technical college," according to Dr. Dianne Brandstadter, assistant associate director for instruction with the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. "But we strongly recommend it for the students pursuing Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees." The implication for our public schools is clear: foreign language study isn't the exclusive domain of university-bound students anymore.

It is also clear that as South Carolina businesses become increasingly involved in global economics, South Carolinians have more opportunities to meet, work, socialize and share neighborhoods with people from other countries. A 1992 survey of member businesses by the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce found that the ability to "appreciate and work well with men and women from diverse backgrounds" is considered a "high" or "very high" priority by the vast majority of respondents.

Here again, foreign language education can help. At all levels of study students of a foreign language are exposed to and learn to understand the customs and beliefs of the language's native speakers. As Dr. Arpan explains, "You can't learn Japanese without learning the culture."

Language skills and cultural awareness, when effectively developed, are complementary keys to success in the 1990s. Together they make good education, good community relations, good business and good sense.

### Intellectual reasons for studying foreign languages

Even without considering global economics and cultural diversity, however, there are other essential benefits – intellectual benefits – to be gained from foreign language study. Among these is the increased command it gives students of their own language.

Students of foreign languages gain a greater understanding of grammatical structures and syntax and also gain an increase in vocabulary. The study of European languages, both modern and classical, enhances vocabulary building because so many English words are derived from those languages. Languages such as Japanese, Arabic and Russian have the additional benefit of requiring students to develop an ability to interpret unfamiliar symbols.

In various studies throughout the country, foreign language study has also been associated with improvements in students' creativity, self-concept, critical thinking abilities, memory, listening

skills and performances on standardized tests. Foreign language educators Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola give examples of several such studies in their 1988 book *Languages and Children – Making the Match: Foreign Language Instruction in the Elementary School*.

Students also gain an increased appreciation for literature, art and music as a result of exposure to foreign cultures. Mental flexibility is enhanced as a result of the reasoning, problem-solving and conceptualizing processes that are frequently used in learning a language.

These benefits hold true for the college-bound and non-college-bound student alike. Even students thought to have poor basic skills gain advantages from foreign language study. According to Curtain and Pesola:

This may be an excellent time to shed the "elitist" image that foreign languages have borne for most of this century in the United States. Evidence from the inner-city schools of Philadelphia, Milwaukee and Cincinnati, among others, supports the idea of including learners of all levels of ability and background in foreign language study. Students with poor skills may even have the most to gain from the opportunity to study languages (p. 47).

In other words, devoting part of the school day to foreign language study does not hurt, and possibly helps, students in their mastery of other subjects – either directly through the application of improved verbal and thinking skills or indirectly as the result of improved self-confidence.

According to an article in the *Iowa FLES Newsletter*, a *Newsletter for Teachers of Foreign Language in the Elementary School* (Winter 1989):

The foreign language segment need not pull time away from basic skills – it can be just one more diverse, enjoyable means of reinforcing those skills. A trained elementary foreign language instructor will develop a rapport with the classroom teacher, explore his or her curriculum, and find ways to enhance the instruction of basic concepts at that grade level. The classroom teacher benefits and the language is acquired and internalized, because it is necessary for communication of thoughts... (p. 2)

All of this evidence leads to the conclusion that foreign language study should be considered an educational basic, along with English, math, science, social studies, physical education and

## Curricular cooperation

"Every area of the curriculum can be reinforced or enriched in the foreign language classroom, and subject content can be taught through the second language. This kind of integration can foster appreciation of other cultures and can add significant dimensions to the content being taught. With close cooperation between language and classroom teachers, the second language experience can contribute directly to the mastery of first language concepts in the curriculum."

Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola, *Languages and Children – Making the Match* (1988), p. 9.





**Foreign language enrollments  
in S.C. secondary schools  
for 1991-1992 school year**

<b>Languages offered (h.s. credit)</b>	<b>Students enrolled (all levels)</b>
Spanish	33,766
French	18,735
Latin	2,596
German	2,119
Japanese	152
Russian	141
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,509</b>

**Total enrollment in S.C. schools,  
grades 9-12: 172,832.**

Source: South Carolina Department of  
Education, *Secondary Schools Profile of  
Studies, 1991-92*; and Satellite Education  
Resources Consortium statistics.

the arts. We can not afford to think of foreign languages as electives or luxuries anymore.

Some positive steps have already been taken. America's National Education Goals, set by the president and the 50 governors, call for a "substantial" increase in "the percentage of students who are competent in more than one language" by the year 2000. And South Carolina's Education Goals, formulated in 1991, also name foreign language study as one of the areas in which students are to be proficient by the turn of the century.

Now, the main question is: how do we get there from here?

**Where we are and where we are going  
in foreign language education**

To be proficient in a foreign language — that is, to be able to communicate successfully in the language in real-life situations — requires time. Lots of time. The current two years of high school foreign language study required for admission to state-supported colleges and universities are not nearly enough.

Nevertheless, enrollment in high school foreign language programs drops dramatically after the second year of study. For example: during the 1991-92 school year, 18,478 South Carolina high school students took Spanish I and 12,233 took Spanish II, but only 2,517 took Spanish III. Enrollment in Spanish IV dropped dramatically to 323.

Fortunately, another more encouraging trend is developing in the state. Slowly but surely, more and more middle school and elementary school students are being given the opportunity to study a foreign language. In the fall of 1984, 23 percent of students in grades 9-12 were enrolled in a foreign language program, along with 3.6 percent of students in grades 7-8 and 1.6 percent in the elementary grades. By 1991, enrollment had increased to 33 percent in grades 9-12, 10 percent in grades 7-8, and 2 percent in the elementary grades.

We must continue this positive trend. The student who begins learning a foreign language in elementary school and continues studying it uninterrupted through high school has the best chance of becoming proficient in the language. As Curtain and Pesola explain in *Languages and Children — Making the Match*:

One of the most important factors influencing the development of language proficiency is the amount of time spent in working with the language. When language

## Why Foreign Languages?

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learning begins earlier, it can go on longer and provide more practice and experience, leading ultimately to greater fluency and effectiveness.

The authors also report that the age of 10 is considered a critical time in the development of attitudes towards other people and countries. This age is an ideal time, therefore, to introduce students to cultures different from their own – all the more reason to introduce foreign languages in the elementary grades.

### A vision for the 1990s and beyond

Keeping all these issues in mind – the economic, cultural and intellectual benefits of learning a foreign language and the advantages of beginning study at an early age – this framework establishes and supports three basic premises of effective foreign language education. The premises are 1) opportunities for foreign language education for every student; 2) foreign language programs that begin in elementary school and continue uninterrupted through high school; and 3) instruction in modern foreign languages that is communication-based.

Together these premises create the vision that will guide foreign language education through the 1990s and into the 21st century. By building on these premises, South Carolina public schools can help prepare all of our students to deal successfully with the challenges and opportunities of a global economy.

### Basic premises of foreign language education

- Opportunities for foreign language education for every student
- Foreign language programs that begin in elementary school and continue uninterrupted through high school
- Instruction in modern foreign languages that is communication-based



## More than one way to communicate

*Comunicación*

Spanish

*Communication*

French

*Kommunikation*

German

そうごりかい

Japanese

ОБЩЕНИЕ

Russian

اتصال

Arabic

联络

Chinese

*Communicatio*

Latin

## II. An Effective Program

- *A systematic approach to change*
- *Guidelines for an effective foreign language program*
- *Program models*
- *What languages should we teach?*

**G**ood planning, cooperation and commitment – these are the keys to an effective foreign language program. Continuous, communication-based foreign language instruction for every student in South Carolina requires ongoing coordination at every level of the state's education system.

From kindergarten teachers to college professors, from local school administrators to the State Board of Education, and within every school district and community in between, a systematic approach must be taken to improve and expand foreign language education in South Carolina's public schools. Only by refining the entire educational system can we help classroom teachers enable students to become proficient in more than one language. And only by making a long-term commitment to foreign language education can we hope to be successful.

### *A systematic approach to change*

Continuous, communication-based foreign language education for every student has a number of implications. Qualified foreign language teachers must be recruited in greater numbers to handle increased enrollments. Teacher preparation programs in the state's colleges and universities must emphasize communication skills and equip future teachers with a variety of teaching methods appropriate for the increasing diversity of age levels and learning styles in foreign language classrooms.

Teacher certification requirements must reflect this emphasis on communication and student diversity, and professional development opportunities must be provided so current teachers can keep up-to-date with methodology changes in their field and maintain their own personal language skills. Local school districts, the State Department of Education and colleges and universities must work together to provide quality programs.

Criteria for selecting instructional materials must reflect the need for nontraditional materials in communication-based classrooms. Extra-curricular foreign language opportunities must be

### **Expanded foreign language education will affect**

- Teacher recruitment practices
- Teacher preparation programs and certification requirements
- Professional development programs
- Instructional materials criteria
- Elementary, middle school and high school curricula
- Educational policy

### Ways businesses can help foreign language programs

- Send representatives to local schools to talk to students about the need for foreign language skills in their particular businesses.
- Provide samples of business materials written in foreign languages for teachers to use in the classroom.
- Sponsor in-service study abroad for teachers to enhance language proficiency and cultural awareness.
- Provide funding for special events, such as an international career day at a local school.
- Sponsor work/study and exchange programs for foreign language students.
- Assist in curriculum development.

provided for students to enhance what they learn in the classroom so real language proficiency can be achieved. And special attention must be paid to the development of foreign language programs in elementary and middle schools, making sure that these programs are coordinated with each other and with local high school programs to ensure a smooth progression of skills from one learning level to another.

To encourage the development of foreign language proficiency among South Carolina students and to facilitate the development of quality programs throughout the state, this framework establishes 15 guidelines for an effective foreign language program. These guidelines are to be used by school districts in designing and evaluating foreign language programs; by the state in structuring educational support systems and setting educational policy in areas such as accreditation and accountability; and by colleges and universities in revising teacher preparation programs.

Individual guidelines will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

### Guidelines for an effective foreign language program

In an effective foreign language program:

1. Every student is given the opportunity to study at least one foreign language.
2. The study of a foreign language begins early in a child's life – ideally in kindergarten, but no later than fourth grade – and study continues uninterrupted through high school.
3. Instruction is communication-based. Functional proficiency in all the basic communication skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – is the primary goal.
4. Foreign language instruction is a permanent, core component of the school curriculum.
5. Teachers, administrators, parents, students and other interested community members work together in establishing the foreign language program, with special effort made to include local businesses in the process.
6. Instruction in foreign languages emphasizes the higher-order thinking skills inherent in the learning of language, such as reasoning, problem-solving, evaluation; and because foreign languages adapt easily to an interdisciplinary approach, instruction is coordinated with lessons in other subjects whenever possible.

7. Students receive foreign language instruction several times a week – ideally five times, but no less than three times – in classes small enough to facilitate communication.

8. Students are exposed to a language's native speakers and their cultures, with recognition given to multi-ethnic diversity within the language. This can be accomplished through the use of authentic listening and reading materials.

9. The curriculum is sequential and articulated; that is, study of a foreign language is continuous, with a smooth and logical progression of skills from one school year to the next.

10. Ongoing communication and mutual cooperation exist among teachers and administrators at every school level, from elementary to college, to ensure successful progression.

11. Guidelines for expected proficiency at specific levels of learning are established and effective methods for assessing student progress are developed.

12. Instruction is provided by foreign language professionals who are proficient in their languages and familiar with a variety of foreign language teaching methods and strategies. Foreign language teachers are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities to maintain and improve personal proficiency.

13. Multimedia and computer technology are available, with centralized resource centers and computer networks established to promote cost-efficiency. Foreign language teachers and school media specialists work together to establish quality collections of foreign language resources.

14. Systematic evaluation and improvement of the program occur at regular intervals.

15. The State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school districts and local businesses and communities work together in developing and funding recommended programs, activities, materials, equipment and technology.

### Program models

While language proficiency is a desirable goal of foreign language programs, there is no one common method for accomplishing that goal. There exists today several program models for effective foreign language instruction from which to choose when designing a program. These models include

*An Interdisciplinary Approach.* A program that involves foreign language instruction across the curriculum with an empha-

### Cultural diversity

French is not just the language of France. French is also spoken in Belgium, Canada, French Guiana, French Polynesia, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Luxembourg, Martinique, New Caledonia, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, Switzerland and 22 African countries, including Algeria, Tunisia, Chad, the Ivory Coast, Senegal and Morocco.



sis on meaningful context and real-world applications presents language as a means for learning about the world, not as an isolated subject in and of itself; introduces or reinforces concepts such as mathematics, social studies and science.

### An interdisciplinary approach

"The perennial question asked by administrators and classroom teachers is: 'What will we have to take out of the curriculum in order to include foreign language instruction? There is currently not enough time in the curriculum for us to accomplish our existing goals.' A foreign language curriculum that introduces or reinforces some mathematics, social studies, and science concepts, and that incorporates study skills and thinking skills, provides a powerful rationale for justifying a stable place in the curriculum for elementary foreign language instruction."

Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola, *Languages and Children – Making the Match* (1988), p. 97.

*Total Immersion.* A program in which students spend most or all of the school day studying content areas (math, science, social studies, etc.) in a foreign language. Instruction in the foreign language itself is incorporated into the curriculum as needed.

*Partial Immersion.* Similar to total immersion, but with less time spent studying content areas in the foreign language.

*FLES – Foreign Language in Elementary School.* Ongoing foreign language instruction in the elementary grades by a language specialist trained in the learning styles and needs of young learners, with emphasis on the language itself and culture; designed as part of an extended sequence of language study leading to continued study in the secondary grades; is usually taught in 20-60-minute class periods, one-five days a week.

*Content-Enriched FLES.* A FLES program with some time (less than half of the school day) spent studying content areas in the foreign language.

*International Baccalaureate Program.* An advanced high school curriculum – including primary and secondary languages, social studies, mathematics and sciences – with an international focus; designed to prepare students for entrance into top colleges and universities worldwide.

*Advanced Placement Program.* A high school program that provides advanced study in specific subjects, such as foreign languages, literature, mathematics, social studies and sciences; a student is administered an AP exam in a specific subject during junior or senior year, successful completion of which earns college-level credit in that subject.

For more information on how these models work in the elementary grades, see Curtain and Pesola's *Languages and Children – Making the Match*, Chapter 3. In upper grades, the traditional secondary model can be enhanced by the addition of similar nontraditional approaches, such as immersion, content-

based instruction, interdisciplinary instruction, individualized study and an international-oriented curriculum.

### What languages should we teach?

The guidelines for an effective foreign language program don't specify which foreign languages should be taught. Administrators, community leaders, parents, students and teachers in each school district need to determine that for themselves.

Careful study, however, should precede decisions about which foreign languages to teach in any given community. Factors to consider include students' future educational and vocational needs; cultural make-up of the community; significance of any foreign investment in the community; and availability of qualified instructors and/or distance learning programs.

The traditional foreign languages of choice in South Carolina's secondary schools are Spanish, French, Latin and German. The three modern languages are spoken by large populations in countries throughout the world, many of which are important trading partners of the United States. Spanish is also becoming increasingly important as a second language in the United States. In South Carolina, French and German are also important to the state's growing international economy.

All four commonly taught languages enhance understanding of the grammatical structures and vocabulary of English and provide access to classic Western literature. While instruction in the modern languages emphasizes oral proficiency, Latin usually focuses on the written word, fostering a more analytical approach to grammatical structures.

Other languages, in addition to the traditional four, have also gained significance in modern American society. The federal government has identified Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian as primary critical languages – under the Foreign Language Assistance Act of 1988 – because of the importance of these cultures to the economic and political welfare of the United States. (Japanese and Russian are already making inroads into foreign language curriculums in South Carolina.)

Still other languages address special interests within individual school districts. These might include African languages such as Swahili; Asian languages such as Vietnamese; Eastern and Southern European languages such as Polish, Italian, Portuguese and modern Greek; and Native American languages.

### Factors to consider when choosing foreign languages

- ° Students' future educational and vocational needs
- ° Cultural make-up of the community
- ° Significance of any foreign investment in the community
- ° Availability of qualified instructors and/or distance learning programs



### A diverse population

"The Census Bureau recently released its report on the number of U.S. residents who speak a language other than English at home. The number of such individuals has grown by more than a third in the past decade, to 31.8 million. This represents 14 percent of the population over the age of 5....

While our education systems, from elementary schools to adult education programs, need to help the newly arrived to learn English, it is also imperative that all Americans try to become comfortable in another language, preferably one commonly spoken in the area in which they live."

Michael S. Pincus, "Non-English-speaking population a large influence on society," *The State*, 6-16-93, p. 11A.

English as a Second Language is also growing in significance as foreign-born citizens move into the state in increasing numbers. Similarly, instruction in non-English languages for native speakers of those languages will become increasingly important as the percentage of international students in the state increases. At present, 55 languages are represented among South Carolina students. During the 1990-91 school year, 1,200 students with limited English proficiency were enrolled in South Carolina public schools. During the 1991-92 school year, that number rose to 1,466.

Finally, American Sign Language is recognized by linguists as a complete and separate language. The training of non-hearing-impaired students in Sign Language would assist in efforts to make a wider range of experiences available to the hearing-impaired.

In designing foreign language programs, it is important to realize that the number of instructional hours necessary to achieve a given level of proficiency will vary considerably from language to language. This variation does not imply that one language is "more difficult" or "less learnable" for Americans than others. It simply reflects the degree of difference between the structure of modern American English and that of other languages.

### III. Making It Work

- *Alternative models for foreign language programs*
- *Teacher certification*
- *Professional development*
- *Student opportunities*
- *A ripple effect throughout the system*

**T**he ideal foreign language program begins in kindergarten and progresses sequentially through grade 12. The program includes the opportunity for daily instruction for every student in every grade by foreign language professionals proficient in the languages they teach and trained in a variety of foreign language teaching methods and strategies. In an ideal program, students graduate from high school able to communicate successfully in more than one language. Such a program is the ultimate goal for all South Carolina schools.

Real-life budget constraints and personnel shortages, however, prevent ideal programs from being implemented overnight. But that doesn't mean school districts should wait until the ideal is possible before expanding foreign language education. School districts should introduce foreign language programs in the lower grades at whatever starting point is possible now. Some schools find it practical to add one grade at a time, starting in an upper grade and working backwards towards kindergarten. Others begin in kindergarten and work forwards.

Following are other alternatives to a full-scale, self-contained foreign language program. These in turn are followed by recommendations for improvements in the areas of teacher certification, professional development and student opportunities – recommendations designed to further enhance foreign language education in the state, now and in the long-run.

#### Alternative models for foreign language programs

Because a shortage of certified foreign language teachers is one of the biggest obstacles to expanded foreign language education, school districts need to look at alternative means of introducing foreign language instruction to students in elementary and middle schools. With some creativity, programs can be developed using a variety of personnel and technological resources, such as

#### The ideal foreign language program includes

- The opportunity for daily instruction for every student, grades K-12
- Teachers with high levels of proficiency in languages taught
- High school graduates with proficiency in at least one foreign language



### Alternative foreign language programs might include

- Itinerant teachers
- High school teachers in elementary classrooms
- Elementary school teachers trained in foreign languages and foreign language instruction
- Native speakers in the classroom
- Video and computer technology
- Distance learning



those listed below. While itinerant teachers may be used successfully on a long-term basis, other models are recommended as interim programs until an effective full-scale program can be implemented.

• *Itinerant teachers.* Districts can provide effective foreign language instruction by sharing personnel among schools. In one South Carolina school district, which has offered French to fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders since the 1960s, five French teachers serve nine elementary schools. Students receive instruction 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

• *High school teachers.* High school teachers, with adequate additional training in teaching foreign languages to younger students, can spend part of the school day working in elementary school classrooms.

• *Elementary school teachers trained in foreign languages and foreign language instruction.* A core of foreign language courses and a course in Teaching Foreign Languages in the Elementary School, similar to courses offered in other subjects, should be added to teacher preparation programs. The course should include training in how to integrate foreign language instruction into the overall elementary curriculum. Such a course should also be offered for practicing elementary school teachers for recertification credit.

• *Native speakers.* As more and more foreign-born citizens move into the state, school districts have a growing pool of qualified foreign language-speaking residents to use as classroom resources. Two elementary schools in the state have offered Japanese to first-graders with the help of a Tokyo native living in the community.

• *Technology.* Until a qualified foreign language teacher can be employed, video-taped programs can be used to introduce foreign languages in the lower grades. These tapes can be either commercially produced or produced by the school district itself and networked to classrooms from a school media center. Computer programs that teach basic foreign language skills are also available.

One middle school in South Carolina provides Spanish instruction to all of its students through a computer and video

program developed through the Utah Department of Education Distance Learning Program and IBM. In another school district, a video-taped Spanish program for elementary students is being developed. A native speaker of Cuban origin is filming the series with the help of third-year high school students.

• *Distance learning.* Schools unable to hire foreign language teachers can also take advantage of distance learning programs. The Satellite Education Resources Consortium, a 23-state collaboration including South Carolina, provides foreign language instruction via satellite. During the 1991-92 school year, 34 South Carolina schools were linked to the program, with 152 students studying Japanese, 62 studying Russian and 25 studying Latin.

## Teacher certification

There are two critical issues related to the certification of foreign language teachers – the need for more highly qualified and properly trained teachers and the need for communication-based training. Both issues need to be addressed on the statewide level.

Foreign languages have been designated a critical needs area in the teaching profession. A qualified person interested in teaching a foreign language in a South Carolina public school – such as a college graduate with a major in a foreign language – can obtain a conditional teaching certificate. With a conditional certificate, a foreign language major can begin teaching while completing requirements of the critical needs certification program. In order to meet the growing demand for foreign language teachers, the state must begin to recruit foreign language majors into teacher preparation programs in greater numbers.

The state also needs to increase its efforts to get qualified and properly trained native speakers of foreign languages into the classroom. These efforts should include lobbying for legislation to allow non-U.S. citizens to become certified teachers.

Once in a preparation program, prospective teachers need a foreign language methods class that addresses the basics of communication-based instruction for appropriate age levels. Candidates for teacher certification in foreign languages should acquire a high level of speaking proficiency in any language to be taught, with the exception of classical languages. The goal should always be to raise the level of proficiency to the most advanced level possible. Foreign travel and/or study experience is recommended as a component of the degree program.

## Some proficiency definitions

According to ACTFL proficiency guidelines, an intermediate-high speaker is one who is "able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Can initiate, sustain, and close a general conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics, but errors are evident."

An advanced speaker is one who is "able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining, and apologizing."

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (1986).

### Don't forget cultural nuances

"Someone at the United Nations once fed a common English saying into a translating computer. The machine was asked to translate the statement into Chinese, then into French, and finally back into English. The phrase chosen was 'Out of sight, out of mind.' What came back was 'Invisible insane.'"

Richard Lederer, *Anguished English* (1987), p. 137.

Prospective foreign language teachers should also receive training in the following:

- second language acquisition theory
- instructional methodology for dealing with diverse learning styles
- specialized methodology for elementary grades if planning to teach in elementary school
- interdisciplinary approaches to foreign language education
- the integration of culture (up-to-date, everyday culture) into language study
- the use of authentic foreign language materials – such as newspapers, menus, short stories, TV commercials, etc. – in the classroom
- the use of multi-media and computer technology
- specialized methods of testing students

Ideally, prospective teachers should also have the opportunity for subsidized study in a foreign country. This travel can sometimes be subsidized by the foreign country itself, an option that should always be explored.

Colleges and universities need to restructure teacher preparation programs to include the above recommendations. Preparation programs for elementary school teachers should also allow for the possibility of a concentration or minor in a specific content area, with foreign languages included as one of the options. Certification programs are also needed in less commonly taught languages, such as Russian and Japanese.

### Professional development

Professional development programs for practicing foreign language teachers must include opportunities for teachers to keep up-to-date with theory and methodology in their field and opportunities to maintain and enhance personal language skills. Both the state and local school districts should provide leadership in planning, funding and publicizing professional development opportunities for teachers, and colleges and universities should make an effort to provide needed programs. Programs should include

- instruction via multi-media
- distance learning

- \* weekend immersion programs
- \* accessible summer programs
- \* subsidized foreign study
- \* recertification credit for foreign travel
- \* short-term teacher exchange programs
- \* release time to upgrade language skills and teaching methods
- \* paid sabbatical
- \* business-sponsored professional development
- \* teacher-of-the-year awards and incentives
- \* college-level courses
- \* study grants and scholarships

Teachers should receive recertification credit for professional development experiences. Some recommended topics for professional development programs are

- \* the use of authentic foreign language materials
- \* the use of multi-media and computer technology
- \* meeting the needs of diverse learners
- \* teaching foreign languages to elementary students

### Student opportunities

Students need opportunities beyond the traditional classroom to practice and develop language skills if they are to develop a high level of proficiency in a foreign language. Extra-curricular activities are also a good way to expose students to other cultures. Some recommended student opportunities are

- \* a Governor's school for foreign languages
- \* weekend immersion programs
- \* summer immersion programs
- \* school exchanges, with appropriate high school credit given for subjects studied abroad
- \* experiences as teaching assistants
- \* study tours
- \* business-sponsored work/study programs
- \* career education, with emphasis on careers available to persons who are multilingual
- \* scholarships for study abroad
- \* pen pals
- \* guest speaker programs

### Foreign TV broadcasts

Satellite Communications for Learning (SCOLA) is a resource for authentic materials for classroom use. SCOLA – which is based in Omaha, Nebraska – provides a 24-hour foreign television channel, with live news broadcasts, weather forecasts, commercials and human interest stories from about 40 countries. A subscription to SCOLA also includes transcriptions and translations of broadcasts, teaching aids and same-day FAX copies of front pages of major newspapers from throughout the world.

### Teachers working together

The Foreign Languages Curriculum Framework Writing Team, the group responsible for writing this framework, is an example of teachers from all levels of the education system working together to coordinate foreign language education. The team consists of teachers from elementary school, middle school, high school and university programs.

- cultural experiences, such as movies and plays
- international days/weeks
- interdisciplinary work – that is, instruction in other subject areas conducted in a foreign language
- computer on-line communications
- news broadcasts from other countries
- interactive multi-media
- recruitment of potential post-secondary language majors to become foreign language teachers

### A ripple effect throughout the system

The introduction of communication-based foreign language study in the elementary grades doesn't happen in a vacuum. It has a ripple effect throughout the education system, influencing all subsequent foreign language programs – all the way up to the university level. High school foreign language programs especially must be reassessed and reorganized to meet the needs of students who come to high school already possessing basic foreign language skills.

The standard high school introductory foreign language course is not suitable for the student who has already studied a language for several years. Different entry points must be established for students with different proficiency levels. In addition, high schools will need to offer more advanced classes to accommodate the growing numbers of students who begin foreign language study in elementary school.

An effort must also be made to get the state's colleges and universities to rethink foreign language placement tests for their entering students. The traditional grammar-based placement test is not the best way to test the modern foreign language student, who has studied with an emphasis on communication. Some means of testing for communication skills must be developed to accompany testing for grammatical skills.

As existing foreign language programs are reevaluated and new ones are established, it is essential that teachers from all levels of the education system be included in decision-making processes. Teacher involvement and interaction provide the surest way to accomplish successful coordination of programs throughout a student's educational career, from kindergarten through college.

## IV. Performance Objectives

- *Organizational plans*
- *The need for assessment and evaluation*
- *Learning standards for elementary and middle school students*
- *Learning standards for secondary students*
- *The importance of culture*
- *Learning standards for Latin students*

**A** French festival – complete with music, dancing, food and a “street celebration” in the school cafeteria – culminated a year’s worth of exposure to French language and culture for students at one of the state’s elementary schools. All ages of students, from kindergartners to sixth-graders, participated to varying degrees in the introductory language program during the 1991-92 school year.

As students begin studying foreign languages at younger ages, it becomes increasingly important to design programs that take into account the varying needs and developmental stages of learners at different grade levels. It is also essential that programs be what foreign language professionals call sequential and articulated. Simply put, that means that the study of a foreign language should be continuous and cumulative, with a smooth and logical progression of skills from one school year to the next.

Concepts and topics can be recycled and expanded from year to year, but tasks become more challenging and complex. Instruction in fourth grade, for example, must be more than a review of material covered in third grade. Fourth-grade communication skills must build on and surpass those developed previously.

At all levels of foreign language education, no matter when study begins, instruction should be based on a sequential, articulated foreign language program from elementary grades through high school. The three primary objectives of such a program are 1) development of communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing; 2) understanding of different cultures; and 3) recognition of the value of language study.

### Organizational plans

When planning expanded foreign language programs, school districts need to give careful attention to student entry points into the programs so that an articulated sequence can be achieved.

### Primary objectives of foreign language instruction, K-12

- Development of communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Appreciation of different cultures
- Recognition of the value of language study



### A continuous sequence

"School language programs in other countries are quite different from ours. Language is most often an expected and a required part of the curriculum; students begin their first foreign language by age 10 and often add a second one in high school. The sequence is continuous, and students finish pre-university education with six or more years of language study. Questions of curriculum aside, we need to consider ways to start language study as early as possible and to retain students in language classes through their senior year."

The College Board, *Academic Preparation In Foreign Language* (1986), p. 108.

Several models (as described in Chapter II) exist for organizing foreign language programs. In large districts with sufficient personnel and funding, there may be two or three models in place.

Whatever model is used, a smooth progression in student communication skills must be achieved for the program to be effective. The most important factor to consider is that once started, foreign language study should continue uninterrupted. A student taking Spanish I in eighth grade, for example, should take Spanish II in ninth grade, not 10th or 11th. And a student beginning foreign language study in elementary school should continue that study throughout middle and high school.

Possible organizational plans, with varying student entry points, include

- a sequential program beginning in kindergarten and continuing through secondary school
- a sequential program beginning in mid-elementary school and continuing through secondary school
- a sequential program beginning in lower middle school and continuing through secondary school

On entering high school, students should be encouraged to continue study in the foreign language begun in elementary school. In addition, students should also be encouraged to begin study in a third, and possibly a fourth, language.

Some provision must be made for transfer students who enter sequential elementary and middle school programs mid-stream. In the lower elementary grades, new students should be integrated into existing classes on the students' appropriate grade levels. In the upper elementary and middle school grades, districts with large transfer populations should offer additional classes for beginning students. In high school, careful grouping must be provided so that beginners in a language are not placed in the same class with students who have some proficiency in the language.

### The need for assessment and evaluation

Periodic assessment of student progress at designated points in the foreign language program is necessary both to evaluate program quality and to ensure the smooth transition of students from one learning level to another. Students must demonstrate competency in defined communication tasks at appropriate times in elementary and middle school programs, to be determined by

student entry points into those programs.

Student progress should be measured by a combination of achievement testing (traditional testing that measures knowledge of a specific body of material taught in the classroom) and proficiency testing (open-ended testing that gauges the ability to function in real-life situations). Interviews with students, videotapes, checklists and portfolios are some of the useful methods for determining student proficiency.

After eighth grade, students may enter secondary year 1, 2 or 3, depending on proficiency level and district policy. Student progress should be assessed again at the end of secondary years 2, 3 and 4, with successful completion of designated proficiency levels noted on student transcripts. Assessments on the secondary level should also include videotapes, portfolios, etc., along with more traditional testing methods.

An effective foreign language program takes into account that individuals develop language proficiency at different rates and that a pre-determined set of performance objectives can't always be met within the confines of the traditional 180-day school year. Foreign language assessment is also complicated by the fact that students enter beginning levels of language study at different grade levels. For that reason, traditional grade-level standardized testing methods are not always appropriate for foreign languages. A fifth-grader with six years of foreign language study will have to be tested differently than a fifth-grader with only two years of study.

Following are summaries of expected learning standards for students in different levels of foreign language study. The standards are based in part on national proficiency guidelines developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

For more information on proficiency in all four areas of communication, see the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (1986), published by the ACTFL Materials Center in Yonkers, New York.

For more information on learning standards currently in use in South Carolina high schools, secondary teachers are referred to a curriculum guide published by the South Carolina Department of Education (SDE, 1990). It is hoped that in the near future a similar in-depth curriculum guide will be developed by the state for elementary and middle school foreign language programs and that the secondary guide will be updated to reflect the revised learning standards outlined in this framework.

### Sample proficiency testing

- Ask student to say several sentences about various objects in the classroom.
- Show student a picture of a storefront and ask student to identify items that could be purchased there.
- Have student relate a portion of a familiar story by making a statement about each of several picture cards in proper story sequence.

Source: Ferndale, Michigan, Public Schools, *Elementary Foreign Language Instructional Objectives, Grades 4-6* (1990).

Learning standards for elementary  
and middle school students

### Weather activity

"Draw a window on the chalkboard. Direct the children to go to the board and draw the weather in the window as you describe it. (Variation: Use a felt or magnet board and have children choose elements to place in the window.) To activate the language, you might lead a discussion about what time of year this weather represents, whether children like or dislike this kind of weather, and what kinds of activities they enjoy in this weather."

Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola, *Languages and Children - Making the Match* (1988), pp. 239-40.



### Elementary School

In the beginning of a sequential elementary program, focus should be on listening and speaking skills. Reading and writing skills will develop later as students become more proficient in reading and writing in their native language. The following standards are designed to be compatible with standards on the secondary level so a sequential program can be achieved and are based on the assumption that students receive foreign language instruction three to five days a week.

**Listening tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. carry out simple commands
2. respond to questions based on narratives, dialogues or announcements, to be presented either electronically or orally by the teacher
3. identify and categorize familiar vocabulary items
4. sequence events based on an oral narrative
5. draw a picture based on an oral description, narration or command

**Speaking tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. answer personal questions
2. role-play from a prepared dialogue
3. respond appropriately in face-to-face conversations
4. describe a picture or object
5. give a command suggested by a picture
6. relay information to another student
7. describe self or family members
8. use appropriate courtesy phrases
9. express likes, dislikes, preferences

**Reading tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. scan text for specific information
2. locate specific information in text types, such as menus, newspaper articles, TV schedules, etc.
3. match labels with pictures
4. sequence events based on a reading passage

5. predict the conclusion of a story
6. make checklists of related words in a reading passage

**Writing tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. copy words and sentences written in foreign language
2. label pictures or objects
3. list and categorize familiar vocabulary
4. write familiar commands
5. complete dialogues with familiar material
6. fill out simple forms
7. write cards, brief messages, casual invitations, thank you notes
8. express likes, dislikes, preferences

**Cultural tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. recognize similarities and differences in cultural customs, such as celebrations of holidays
2. recognize and name typical foods
3. sing songs and recite rhymes
4. name and locate countries and major geographical features, such as rivers, mountains and oceans
5. identify flags, landmarks, monuments and major historical figures

*(Care should be taken to avoid stereotypical portrayals when presenting cultural material.)*

**Topics:** "About me" (age, physical attributes, health, likes/dislikes); friends and others (greetings, classmates); school and career (classroom vocabulary); home life (family, house, pets); natural world (weather, geography, animals); political and social world (cities, nations, genders, races).

### **Middle School**

Tasks in the middle school grades should be essentially the same as those in elementary school, but with age-appropriate activities and topics, increased use of authentic texts and more emphasis on reading and writing.

### **Food for thought**

"An ideal elementary school foreign language setting will offer access to a kitchen, in which food can be prepared with maximum involvement of the students. If no kitchen is available, many food activities can take place in the classroom itself with a minimum of equipment; for example, making sugar popcorn for students in French and German classes or making a French breakfast with French bread and unsalted butter or with a croissant and hot chocolate drunk out of bowls. German or French language classes might make cheese fondue with butter-milk and Swiss cheese in an electric fondue pot. Spanish classes might prepare tacos, tostadas, or fried plantains."

Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola, *Languages and Children – Making the Match* (1988), pp. 258-59.

### Authentic materials

Foreign travel is one of the best ways to collect authentic materials for the foreign language classroom. During their travels, teachers often visit "toy stores, bookstores, record stores, and novelty and souvenir shops." Some of the finds they bring back with them range "from empty packaging for candy and soft drinks to menus, coins, and ticket stubs."

A teacher who can't travel can correspond with an English teacher in another country. The two teachers can exchange materials as needed without great expense. Also, free posters and brochures are often available from travel agencies, embassies and consulates, visitors' bureaus in major cities, international airlines and multinational businesses.

Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola, *Languages and Children – Making the Match* (1988), pp. 200-201.

#### *Listening tasks – The student will be able to*

1. understand the main idea of authentic listening texts such as weather reports, news items, etc.
2. relay a message from an announcement or phone call

#### *Speaking tasks – The student will be able to*

1. participate in and maintain conversations
2. give a more extended response to questions
3. describe familiar objects and people

#### *Reading tasks – The student will be able to*

1. read letters, dialogues and other texts
2. read authentic ads and cartoons
3. sequence events
4. draw conclusions
5. answer questions

#### *Writing tasks – The student will be able to*

1. write letters to friends and pen pals
2. write a brief autobiography
3. write original dialogues

#### *Cultural tasks – The student will be able to*

1. compare American customs, such as handshakes and embraces, to foreign customs
2. research and report on landmarks and historical figures

**Topics:** "About me" (hobbies, beliefs, opinions, clothes); friends and others (dating, pen pals, phone); school and career (professions, school subjects); home life (vacations, chores, rules); natural world (nature, environment); political and social world (social customs, etiquette); and all topics from elementary school.

### Learning standards for secondary students

The following learning standards define expected levels of performance by secondary students who have successfully completed the programs of foreign language study recommended in this document for elementary and middle school students prior

to their foreign language study in high school. For standards currently in use in secondary schools – which are designed for students with no foreign language study prior to high school – see the *South Carolina Framework for Foreign Languages* (1990).

### Listening

**Secondary years 1 and 2 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. comprehend the main idea(s) in a wide variety of everyday authentic listening texts
2. follow and summarize essential information from face-to-face and telephone communications

**Content/context:** Topically familiar material embedded in natural contexts.

**Secondary year 3 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. comprehend questions and answers, main idea(s) and some supporting detail in face-to-face and telephone conversations
2. understand main idea(s) and some supporting detail in most everyday authentic listening tasks
3. detect attitude of speaker(s) with reference to pitch, intonation and structure features

**Content/context:** Most topically familiar and some less familiar material in natural contexts in structurally straightforward texts.

**Secondary year 4 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. understand main ideas and considerable supporting detail in most face-to-face and telephone communications at a normal rate of delivery
2. follow and summarize narrations of factual material and non-technical prose

**Content/context:** Most texts of general interest to the age group and those on topics of personal interest; texts can be somewhat more complicated in structure, but are delivered in natural contexts.

### Listening comprehension

Student hears part of a conversation:

*Camarero, tráeme el menú cuanto antes. Tengo mucha hambre y quiero comer.*

Student is then asked to identify where the conversation occurs, choosing from the following possible answers:

- a. *en el campo*
- b. *en un motel*
- c. *en un restaurante*
- d. *en un jardín*

Source: The South Carolina Council on Foreign Language Placement and Curriculum, *Report on Foreign Language Placement Testing and Procedures at Post-Secondary Institutions in South Carolina* (1990), p. 35.

### Communication in action

"One morning a student came running into my classroom to excitedly report that she had had an opportunity to do something useful with her Spanish. She had a part-time job working in a department store and a non-English-speaking customer came in with a problem. No one could understand what he was trying to communicate and he was becoming increasingly frustrated and upset.

"Someone happened to remember that my student was taking Spanish in high school so she was sent up front. She was able to understand the problem, explain to the customer what he needed to know and resolve the conflict. (He thought he had been overcharged because he had misread a sale sign.)

"The customer left satisfied that he had been treated fairly, the store gained respect for my student, and she felt great about her accomplishment."

Submitted by a Spanish teacher at Lancaster High School.

### Speaking

*Secondary years 1 and 2 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. participate in and maintain everyday conversations on a variety of topics
2. provide an appropriately complete response to everyday questions
3. give simple directions and describe places, people and events in simple sentences
4. get into, through and out of a survival situation, such as arranging transportation or purchasing a meal

*Content/context:* Face-to-face and telephone conversations on everyday topics and matters of particular personal interest.

*Secondary year 3 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. describe people, places and events in lengthier, connected utterances
2. narrate a sequence of events with appropriate reference to time frame in lengthier, connected utterances
3. give directions
4. state alternatives

*Content/context:* Virtually all normal speaking situations encountered by secondary-level students; everyday topics and those of particular interest to teenagers.

*Secondary year 4 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. narrate a sequence of events with appropriate reference to time frame in paragraph-length structures with some precision
2. handle everyday situations with some unforeseen complications, such as receiving incorrect change
3. describe objects, persons and events so as to differentiate the unique characteristics of the items considered
4. compare and explore alternatives

*Content/context:* Many normal speaking situations encountered by age group; a good variety of concrete topics, including some current events of personal interest or particular knowledge.

## Reading

**Secondary years 1 and 2 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. comprehend the main idea(s) and some supporting detail in a wide variety of authentic reading texts
2. follow concrete instructions contained in reading passages
3. apply known meanings to the deciphering of unknown words and phrases
4. use bilingual dictionary appropriately to support the reading process

**Content/context:** Topically familiar material in shorter texts that fully replicate the originally published materials.

**Secondary year 3 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. distinguish main idea(s) and supporting detail in a wide variety of authentic reading texts
2. distinguish the various intents of writers: description, narration, editorial, directions, personal contact
3. compare the points of view of two texts on the same topic

**Content/context:** Shorter and medium length authentic texts that exhibit some complication in structure, but deal with everyday topics or matters of individual concern to the student; reproduced as originally published.

**Secondary year 4 tasks** – *The student will be able to*

1. comprehend main idea(s) and virtually all supporting detail in a wide variety of authentic texts directed towards teenagers and young adults
2. detect with some emerging facility variations in style and register
3. determine point of view of writer and/or individual characters in literary works

**Content/context:** Wide variety of text types of interest to age group, including literary works (short stories, sketches, essays, shorter novels, some poetry) and non-literary prose (editorials, news and feature articles, personal correspondence).

## Reading activity

**Objective:** To recognize names of various foods, food groups and nutrition terms.

**Learning task:** Students will read an illustrated list of foods and calories.

**Procedures:** The teacher distributes the list and guides the students through a discussion in French of diets, foods and health. Some vocabulary should be introduced if the students are not familiar with it: *mincir, maigrir, perdre, kilos, mets, cru, poivron, huile, matière grasse, santé*. The following questions can be asked: *Qu'est-ce qu'on mange quand on veut maigrir? Est-ce qu'il faut manger beaucoup de beurre? Est-ce qu'on mange des fruits et des légumes si on est au régime?*

Source: South Carolina Department of Education, *South Carolina Framework for Foreign Languages* (1990), p. 119.



### Writing activity

Students are directed to look at photographs of signs, such as the one below, and then expand on the meaning of the signs for other students. Students are told to pick up word cues and other cues from the signs.

**Hunde sind an der  
Leine zu führen  
und dürfen nicht ins Wasser**

Source: Winkler, George and Margrit  
Meinel Diehl, *Für Euch zum Schreiben!*  
*Workbook (German: Advanced Level)*  
(1985), p. 110.

### Writing

*Secondary years 1 and 2 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. fill out informational surveys which include responses to some questions that require answers of more than one sentence in length
2. provide written directions
3. describe contemporary persons, events and places in simple prose
4. narrate a sequence of events with some emerging ability to use connectors

*Content/context:* Informational surveys, notes, personal letters, short academic papers; familiar topics of personal interest to age group.

*Secondary year 3 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. describe contemporary and historical people, places and events in lengthier, connected prose
2. narrate a sequence of events with appropriate reference to time frame in lengthier, connected prose
3. give directions in sequence
4. compare alternatives
5. use a bilingual dictionary to support the writing skill

*Content/context:* Most normal writing situations encountered by secondary-level students; everyday topics and those of particular interest to teenagers.

*Secondary year 4 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. write more extensive descriptions and narrations of several paragraphs in length
2. summarize reading and listening texts
3. state an opinion on a familiar topic and provide some extended explanation that supports that opinion
4. respond in writing in the variety of social and academic situations normally expected of the age group

*Content/context:* Virtually all normal writing situations encountered by secondary-level students; wide variety of everyday topics and those of personal interest and expertise.

## Secondary Topics

**Secondary years 1 and 2** – Basic classroom objects, school activities, family members, time expressions, weather/seasons, nationalities, self-identification, professions, simple greetings, basic courtesy expressions, likes/dislikes, leisure time, phone conversations, transportation, colors, numbers, dates, clothing, food, body, health, animals, money, travel, directions, location, shopping.

**Secondary year 3** – Familiar everyday topics, biographical information, personal information, post office, future plans, invitations, directions, restaurants, foods, lodging, money, hobbies, shopping, health, instructions and all topics from years 1 and 2.

**Secondary year 4** – Current issues, education, travel, history, politics, leisure, cultural customs and all topics from years 1, 2 and 3.

## The importance of culture

Separate cultural tasks are not included in the secondary learning standards because a cultural component is inherent in the stated communication tasks, contexts and topics. For example, the speaking task of “get into, through and out of a survival situation, such as arranging transportation or purchasing a meal” provides an ideal situation for discussing travel and eating customs in another country. The use of authentic contexts for reading tasks, such as magazines and newspapers, will automatically teach students about everyday life in another country. And topics like clothing, money, politics and leisure easily lend themselves to discussions of culture.

Cultural instruction should be provided at every level of a foreign language program and in conjunction with appropriate contexts and language tasks, not as isolated facts and circumstances. Culture study is much more than learning about rivers and monuments and great works of art. It's also about learning polite ways to greet people, socially correct ways to ask questions and local attitudes toward money, food and family life. According to The College Board publication *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language: Teaching for Transition From High School To College*:

Today, more than ever before, culture and language exist side by side in the foreign language curriculum.

## Food as culture

“In making decisions about what cultural elements to teach, teachers should be guided by the contexts, content areas, and functions that are already built into the curriculum. For example, food may be featured in the curriculum context for teaching particular grammar points, vocabulary, and so on. It should also serve as the context for teaching cultural information – for example, what types of food are served at each meal, at what times meals are eaten, the order in which foods are eaten, how guests are honored, and what gifts are appropriate for one's host. The purpose of this information should be to introduce students to a way of life that is varied, rich, and complete in itself.”

The College Board, *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language* (1986), p. 44.

### Latin for young learners

"A renaissance of sorts has taken place in the study of Latin in recent years, and much of the activity has centered on the elementary school curriculum. Grades 4 through 6 have proved to be an excellent time to begin the study of a classical language. These formative years are ideal for building a foundation for future modern language study as well as a solid basis for improved native language skills."

The College Board, *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language* (1986), p. 52.



Textbooks take great care to present authentic visual and written cultural materials. The type of cultural information, sometimes referred to as "capital C," or civilization, still receives coverage, but it has taken second place to the "small c" culture, that is, the life-style and customs of our people. The curriculum should make room to accommodate both (p. 43).

The College Board also says that cultural instruction should begin with the first lesson in the first foreign language course offered to students because "language without culture serves no meaningful communicative purpose." Students need to learn

that having discrete pieces of information about another culture is not all they need to fit easily into another culture; they must also learn to observe and reflect with a human perspective as possible and avoid viewing culture as a collection of facts (p. 43).

### Learning standards for Latin students

Although Latin is no longer a spoken language and its goals are somewhat different from those of modern spoken languages, it is still of great value to those who study it. The most noted result of Latin study is an increase in student abilities in vocabulary and grammar. Due to the highly structured nature of Latin, its students gain greater insight into the structure and vocabulary of the English language.

A common misconception is that Latin is for college-bound or "elite" students only. However, successful programs throughout the country (e.g., Philadelphia, New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles) have demonstrated that Latin is a vital element in the intellectual development of all students.

Reading is the primary objective of the Latin program, supported by limited skills in writing, speaking and listening. The ability to read Latin requires the learning of vocabulary and the analysis of grammatical structures. Reading skills progress from phrases and sentences of simple Latin to longer passages adapted from Latin authors and, for advanced students, to authentic Latin texts (in both prose and poetry) from authors such as Caesar, Cicero, Horace, Catullus and Vergil.

Another goal of the Latin program is cultural awareness. Students study Roman daily life, art, architecture, history, literature, myths and legends. As a result, students become better equipped to analyze, understand, criticize and respect the diverse cultural threads of the modern world and to achieve cross-cultural understanding. Students also become aware of the pervasiveness of the classical influence on Western society in art, literature, social customs, science, medicine, architecture and government, including an observable influence on America's Founding Fathers and the American system of government.

A sequential Latin program emphasizes oral and aural skills in the elementary school and progresses to the development of reading and writing skills as the student matures. A Latin student is expected to achieve many of the same objectives as a student of a modern foreign language, with some additional objectives specific to Latin. While some of the learning standards outlined on pages 26-30 are not suited to Latin, additional benefits (like those already described) are gained through its study.

The following learning standards, according to level, were established by the South Carolina Classical Association.

### ***Latin***

#### ***Elementary school tasks – The student will be able to***

1. carry out simple commands [listening]
2. use appropriate greetings and courtesy phrases [speaking]
3. recognize Latin mottoes, phrases and abbreviations in daily life (*e pluribus unum*) [reading]
4. identify and categorize familiar vocabulary items with appropriate labels [writing]
5. recognize similarities and differences in cultural customs, such as dress (e.g., toga) [cultural]

#### ***Middle school tasks – The student will be able to***

1. understand the main idea of a listening passage of simple Latin [listening]
2. respond to questions with simple, but complete, sentences [speaking]
3. read and comprehend simple prose passages of Latin [reading]
4. compose syntactically correct simple Latin sentences [writing]

### **Personal testimony**

"I value the Latin courses which I took in high school for several reasons: the discipline it taught me; the historical context – it was a history and culture lesson as well as a lesson in language; and, most important to me, the knowledge which I gained in the areas of vocabulary and grammatical development. I feel the study of Latin is an important part of a sophisticated and intelligent person's education."

Ben Rast, financial advisor for Prudential Securities, Columbia, South Carolina.

### More about Latin

"If destiny guided me anywhere, anytime, during my four years at Brooklyn Prep, it was through the door of my Latin class on the first day of my third year...So Virgil, and his hero Aeneas, the founder of Rome, entered my life. More than entered it. The adventures of Aeneas seeped into far corners of my mind, into my feelings about what is true and honorable and important. They helped shape everything I have since become."

Joe Paterno, *Paterno: By the Book* (1989), p. 37 and p. 42.

5. identify examples of classical architecture in the community (e.g., Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns) [cultural]

In addition, the middle school student will develop an awareness of classical mythology and its influence on the modern world (e.g., brand names; astronomy: names of planets and stars; cultural customs: Cupid and Valentine's Day).

#### *Secondary years 1 and 2 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. continue to develop same speaking, listening and writing skills as in middle school, with more weight given to writing skills than to speaking and listening skills
2. read and comprehend extended passages of Latin prose adapted from ancient authors [reading]

#### *Secondary years 3 and 4 tasks – The student will be able to*

1. continue use of same listening skills
2. read aloud Latin poetry with correct metrical inflection [speaking]
3. read and comprehend extended passages of authentic Latin prose and poetry [reading]
4. construct more complex Latin sentences [writing]

## V. Students and Teachers

- *A cognitive approach*
- *Different ways to learn*
- *The eclectic teacher*
- *Communication skills/sample activities*
- *Grammar's role*
- *Foreign languages across the curriculum*

**A**n elementary school foreign language teacher in an upstate county uses St. Patrick's Day as an occasion to teach French vocabulary. She asks her students – speaking French throughout the lesson – what color they're wearing today. "Vert," they answer. And what specific articles of clothing are *vert* today? "*Mes chaussettes*," is one reply.

This seemingly simple lesson has a lot going on. The teacher has emphasized conversational communication; she has made the students an active part of the lesson; and she has made learning a language interesting. This is the way languages should be taught today.

### A cognitive approach

Today's foreign language teachers place less emphasis on development of native-like pronunciation and grammar at early stages of learning and more on the ability to understand and be understood. They rely less on repetitive drills and more on listening and speaking activities designed to simulate real-life situations.

Today's foreign language students are producers of real language, not just repeaters of phony dialogues out of text books. They are active participants in a two-way street of communication, not simply memorizers of vocabulary and grammar rules.

A field once heavily influenced by behaviorist methodology – which was based on the belief that if students heard and practiced native-like pronunciation and grammar often enough, proper language habits would eventually become second nature to them – now incorporates approaches to language learning based on cognitive psychology.

Cognitive psychology views the mind as a creative, dynamic agent of learning – an active participant in the learning process, not simply a sponge soaking up information and responding to stimuli. According to cognitive theory, individuals control

### Meaningful learning

"Learning should always be *meaningful*; that is, students should understand at all times what they are being asked to do. New material should always be organized so that it is relatable to students' existing cognitive structure. Since not all students learn in the same way, the teacher should appeal to all senses and learning styles."

Alice C. Omaggio, *Teaching Language in Context* (1986), p. 67.

### Cooperative learning

At Lexington High School, French students work in groups of four or five to create and produce – often on videotape – original news broadcasts, complete with news reports, commercials and weather forecasts in French. This project requires some knowledge of current events, a certain amount of creativity and a good deal of cooperation.

and are responsible for their own learning. Learning is an internal process, not an external force.

In applying cognitive methodology, foreign language teachers have moved from treating knowledge of a foreign language as an end in itself to treating the language as a means to a more significant end: communication. Emphasis has changed from what students *know* about a language to what students can actually *do* with a language. As a result, several trends have developed in foreign language classrooms in recent years, including:

- student-centered instruction, with students having as much – if not more – opportunity to speak as the teacher, and with students participating in decisions about topics to be discussed
- more conversation *in* the language and less discussion *about* the language
- more opportunities for cooperative learning (working in pairs and small groups) and less reliance on competition
- more emphasis on acceptable communication and less on native-like pronunciation and grammar
- more use of authentic cultural materials – such as restaurant menus, newspapers and television programs – as springboards for communication in the language and less separation of the study of culture from language production
- the use of interweaving/spiraling/recycling – or teaching the same thing in different ways – to reinforce what is taught and to meet the needs of students with different learning styles
- an interdisciplinary approach, in which foreign language instruction is combined with instruction in other subject areas

Here's an example of a communication-based lesson in action: A student leaves the classroom. While the student is gone, something in the classroom is hidden from view. The student returns and follows the directions of classmates in order to find the missing object. The student can't do anything without first being told to do so by classmates. All talking among students, of course, is done in the foreign language.

In an activity like this, students are using language and getting results. That's what communication is all about.

## Different ways to learn

As theories about the teaching of foreign languages have evolved over the years, so have opinions about how students learn. Research has shown that when confronted with learning another language, students exhibit a variety of individual learning styles and strategies.

For example, some students are more visual than others, some are more auditory and still others are more kinesthetic (meaning they have to physically experience something before they can learn it). Foreign language teachers must take these differences into account when planning classroom activities. They can't expect to *teach* all of their students the same way, because all students don't *learn* the same way.

Most teachers are familiar with the basic tenets of educational psychology and can cite examples of students who illustrate perfectly one theory or another. But teachers must go beyond general theories and delve more deeply into the matter of individual learning styles and strategies if they want to maximize their effectiveness as teachers. They must realize that learning styles run the gamut from the logical, analytical, bit-by-bit approach of some students to the holistic orientation of others; from the shy, low-key manner of the introvert to the expansive, communicative way of the extrovert.

Learning strategies – the actual operations used by students to acquire, store and retrieve information – are equally varied. It is probable, in fact, that no two language students will deal spontaneously in the same manner with the same language-learning task.

In spite of the variety of learning strategies that students use, however, some tentative conclusions have been reached about general tendencies. Rebecca Oxford and David Crookall, writing in a 1989 issue of the *Modern Language Journal*, have compiled a list of generalizations about language-learning strategies (pp. 413-14). Paraphrases of key points follow:

\* A variety of strategies are used by good learners – strategies for organizing, focusing and evaluating learning; strategies for handling personal attitudes and emotions; strategies for dealing with unfamiliar sounds, writing systems and cultural values; and strategies for working with others.

## Reading styles

"Reading is various. It changes as the message or story comes into focus, and it alters in tune with the reader's purpose.... Standing at a bus stop, a reader can skim the posted notice just to find out if he is at the right stop on the right line. He can also read the schedule through, studying it, because he wants to know what he can expect of public transportation at various times of the day. He can investigate the schedule carefully for an answer to a larger question: 'How does this city share its resources between housing projects and middle-class neighborhoods?'"

"Teachers know this variety and want their students to recognize it. After all, that is why foreign language classes include dialogues, stories, and menus. But mere offering is often not enough. Teachers may literally have to act out the way their reading changes, in order to make the variations in approach visible and concrete for students."

Bette Hirsch, *Languages of Thought: Thinking, Reading, and Foreign Languages* (1989), p. 29.



### Useful reading strategies

- Identifying familiar words first while scanning material
- Looking for words that resemble English words
- Guessing meaning of words based on context
- Using clues from titles and illustrations
- Underlining unfamiliar words and phrases
- Identifying main ideas in text
- Scanning the text for specific information
- Predicting logical outcomes of stories



• It is advisable for teachers to teach learning strategies overtly so that students become aware of how best to use them. For optimal results, this instruction should be incorporated into routine classroom activities.

• Teachers usually don't know which strategies their students are using until they've conducted some form of research, either formally or informally.

Not only must teachers recognize that their students use different learning strategies, they must also help their students select and implement the most appropriate strategies for specific language-learning tasks. For example, teachers can instruct students to use nonverbal clues to meaning when listening to narrations or dialogues; to group like-words together when learning vocabulary; and to identify all familiar words first while scanning written material. In short, teachers must teach the language while at the same time helping their students discover the most efficient ways for them, as individuals, to learn the language.

The fundamental realization that people learn in different ways is sometimes obscured in a search for "The Method" that will prove professionally rewarding to teachers and satisfying and effective for their students. But if teachers continue to pursue "The Method" without taking into account that it may not be appropriate for all of their students, they are doomed – if not to failure, then at least to limited success.

That is not to say that teachers must design personalized lesson plans for all of the 150 or so students they teach each school day. But teachers must develop multiple approaches, to be used in varying combinations, if they hope to be effective with all of their students. It is the teacher's responsibility to become aware of students' different learning styles and of the strategies they use in conjunction with those styles and then to determine how students can make the most appropriate match between the two.

### The eclectic teacher

As has been made clear in previous chapters, there is no one model for an effective communication-based program. Many foreign language professionals advocate using elements from several models based on a sound knowledge of second-language acquisition and instruction.

An eclectic approach allows for both individual teaching styles and individual learning styles. Some guidelines do exist, however, for the effective foreign language classroom, where the main goal is to help each student develop into an individual who exercises fluency, flexibility and originality with language. Guidelines include

- Create a secure environment that fosters risk-taking and "can-do" attitudes. Bette Hirsch writes in *Languages of Thought: Thinking, Reading, and Foreign Languages*: "Teachers now value the student who will risk generating a novel sentence as much as the student who has a keen sense of grammatical patterns." (p. 8)
- Focus on communicative ability more than technical correctness. Congratulate a student for successfully getting a message across to the rest of the class, even if the message includes grammar or punctuation mistakes.
- Expose students to topics that trigger their interests and then relate those interests to other cultures. High school students, for example, can practice language use while discussing dating practices in another country. Career-related topics are also good.
- Take into consideration students' readiness in their native language. Look for children's books written in foreign languages to use in elementary school foreign language classes, for example.
- Use a variety of teaching techniques, appealing at different times to all five senses, to accommodate the variety of learning styles and strategies among students. Allow a student to hold an orange and smell an orange while learning the foreign name for the fruit and the student will have an easier time remembering the new word.
- Use a combination of individual, pair, small-group and class activities, all in the language being studied, such as:

1. Speaking individually, students can narrate to the class things they did over the weekend.
2. Working in pairs, one student can interview another about a topic of interest.
3. In a small group, one student can describe a picture while the others draw what is described.

## Foreign language materials useful in the classroom

Newspapers and magazines  
Television and radio spots  
Short stories and poetry  
Children's books  
Restaurant menus  
Hotel bills  
Airplane/train schedules  
Help-wanted ads  
Job resumes and applications  
Personal letters  
Greeting cards



### Cultural appropriateness

"Part of learning a new language is learning to recognize differences in world views, customs, beliefs, and social conventions. If a speaker wants to express a certain emotion in a [foreign] language – a sense of urgency, anger, impatience, deference, or authority, for example – in what manner can the emotion be expressed? Which voice modulations, facial expressions, and gestures would be culturally appropriate? Students need to learn that cultures are often quite different but that they all have values. The language cannot be separated from the culture that gives it life."

California State Board of Education,  
*Foreign Language Framework for California  
Public Schools Kindergarten through Grade  
Twelve* (1989), p. 8.

4. An entire class can listen to a tape or watch a video together and then write down answers to specific questions about the program.

Use audio-visual aids freely. Students need to hear foreign languages spoken by native speakers at normal speed and to read the languages in authentic contexts. Foreign language teachers should work closely with their school media specialists in establishing foreign language audio-visual collections.

Accompany each activity with positive reinforcement. Concentrate on what students are doing right, not on what they're doing wrong. They will respond with a more positive attitude towards language learning.

### Communication skills/sample activities

A communication-based program emphasizes all four modes of communication – listening, speaking, reading and writing. Following are some sample communication activities designed with various learning styles and strategies in mind and based on the performance objectives outlined in Chapter IV.

When introducing a new skill, a pre-speaking phase allows time for concept attainment before verbal production. This phase may include a process called Total Physical Response, during which students respond to verbal commands given in the foreign language – commands such as: "Walk." "Don't walk." "Put *your* paper on *my* desk." Student responses are physical, not verbal.

Directed listening activities make use of authentic materials, such as radio announcements, television commercials and recorded telephone conversations, without overwhelming the beginning student. Students hear the language spoken by native speakers at normal speed. They are not expected to understand every detail of the material, but are directed to listen for specific information, such as a telephone number or date.

Following the pre-speaking/listening period, students are encouraged to answer questions and initiate conversations using short – even one-word – utterances. Gradually these minimal responses grow to complete sentences where appropriate. Total physical response can be used again, this time with students giving commands to each other and to the teacher. Guessing games are also useful here. Students can divide into pairs, with one student naming items in a given category and the other trying to guess the

category.

Reading activities also include multiple approaches and student involvement. Beginning activities might include reading with flash cards; unscrambling words and rearranging them in meaningful sentences; performing commands read from slips of paper; and conducting a classroom scavenger hunt with all items to be found written down. Later, students can do dramatic readings and unscramble and rearrange parts of a story. At higher levels of reading, authentic materials in their original formats, such as newspaper and magazine articles, are recommended.

Writing activities include realistic tasks, like writing letters to pen pals and transcribing phone messages. Students can also be divided into small groups and given several bits of information, which they must collectively use in creating a story. Or, give students a chart containing different parts of a sentence and have them form a certain number of complete sentences or paragraphs with that information. Students can also fill in comic strip bubbles, write letters to Santa Claus, work crossword puzzles, fill out job resumes, summarize something they have read or write short poems.

This sampling of communication-based activities is by no means exhaustive. It needs only the creativity of students and teachers, working together, to be expanded. (For more ideas, see the *South Carolina Framework For Foreign Languages*, 1990.)

## Grammar's role

To say that today's foreign language programs should be communication-based is not to say that traditional grammar study is no longer important. But, in the modern curriculum, grammar plays a supporting role to communication needs.

In the communication approach to teaching foreign languages, grammatical accuracy is viewed as a process, not an event. It is believed that students will develop accuracy gradually, on their own, if provided with exposure to a great deal of comprehensible language, in the same way that children learn how to accurately use their native language.

Mistakes are a natural part of the language-learning process. But as students develop in proficiency, they will eventually reach the point where they begin asking specific questions about grammar. Teachers can take advantage of these occasions to enhance student accuracy.

## When to correct

"When students are engaged in communicative activities that focus on meaning...the teacher's role should be to observe the errors rather than to correct them on the spot. The correction should come later, perhaps in the form of a manipulative or a meaningful drill of points that most students had trouble with in the communicative exercises. The importance of delaying the correction is that students are encouraged to treat the oral interaction as real communication, and not as a pretext for a grammar lesson. The exchange of information in the student-to-student interaction provides greater motivation for communication than any pattern drill ever can."

The College Board, *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language* (1986), pp 69-70.

### Languages and math

"Some mathematics competencies do have a role to play in foreign language study. For example, it is not unreasonable to expect students to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in the foreign language and to learn the metric system...Students need to practice these skills in order to count; give historical and birth dates; use telephone numbers; read train, plane, theater, movie, and TV schedules; tell time using the 24-hour system; make currency exchanges; describe height and weight and clothing sizes – in short, to learn how to make their way in the practical and necessary routines of daily living. Knowledge of these skills is an indispensable part of foreign language instruction. Foreign language study provides ample opportunities for students to become proficient at using the simple arithmetic of everyday life."

The College Board, *Academic Preparation in Foreign Language* (1986) pp. 100-101.



### Foreign languages across the curriculum

Foreign languages are ideal candidates for interdisciplinary teaching. With its emphasis on meaningful content and real-world applications, a communication-based foreign language program presents language as a means for learning about the world, not as an isolated subject in and of itself.

Time spent studying foreign languages is not time taken away from other areas, but time spent reinforcing concepts and skills learned in other subjects. For example, students can learn the metric system in French, study geography in Spanish or write poetry in German. Students can also use sewing patterns and recipes from another country in home economics class and receive instruction in art and physical education in a second language. In order for interdisciplinary work to be effective, foreign language teachers must work closely with content-area teachers to coordinate instruction, with teachers acting as resources for each other.

Interdisciplinary teaching is a mutually beneficial experience, enhancing both content knowledge and language skills. In *Languages and Children – Making the Match*, Helena Anderson Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola explain:

When content based instruction is incorporated into elementary school foreign language programs, the classroom teacher who must struggle to schedule a multitude of curricular areas into a limited amount of time will see the elementary school foreign language teacher as an ally in this effort, rather than as someone who is taking away another valuable block of time (p. 112).

Student projects can also cross disciplinary lines. The following secondary-level example is taken from an article by Linda M. Crawford-Lange in *Curriculum, Competence, and the Foreign Language Teacher*, edited by Theodore V. Higgs:

Language students could rewrite in storybook form a play they had written and performed earlier in the year. They would then work with art students to illustrate the text, being sure that the representations were culturally appropriate. Students from the graphics department could be invited to print and bind the storybook, which could be used with elementary-level students (pp. 94-95).

By initiating and promoting interdisciplinary work, foreign language teachers not only improve the general curriculum, but also secure an integral role for foreign languages in that curriculum.

## VI. Instructional Materials

- *Content criteria*
- *Presentation criteria*
- *Pedagogical criteria*
- *Flexibility and variety*

An effective foreign language program requires a variety of instructional materials, including many that are nontraditional (such as computer software and interactive multimedia) and many usually considered supplementary (such as audio-visual aids, foreign newspapers, foreign magazines and other authentic materials).

Because of the unique role of nontraditional and supplementary materials in foreign languages – not luxuries, but integral components of the program – these materials should be of quality as high as that of traditional basal materials. In fact, these materials should be of such quality that they can be used as alternatives to traditional textbooks; and the state's materials adoption process should be flexible enough to allow school districts that option.

All foreign language instructional materials – whether supplementary or basal, traditional or nontraditional – should meet the following general criteria:

- Materials should support a sequential, articulated, communication-based curriculum as established in this framework.
- Materials should incorporate an active and creative role for teachers and students, taking diverse learning styles into account.
- Materials should include authentic and meaningful content, with culture integrated throughout.

More specific criteria, categorized according to content, presentation and pedagogy, follow. Materials must also satisfy guidelines of the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Instructional Technology Development.

### Useful media and technology

- Foreign newspapers and magazines (including purchase of duplication rights)
- Fiction and nonfiction written in other languages
- Video and audio tapes produced in other languages
- Foreign television programs
- Computer software
- Interactive multi-media (such as "Montevidisco," produced by Brigham Young University, and "A la rencontre de Philippe," produced by Massachusetts Institute of Technology)



### Content criteria

All foreign language instructional materials should meet the following content criteria:

#### About computers

"The foreign language student and teacher can do many things at the computer. Drill can be less tedious than when a text or a workbook is used, and the feedback is immediate – and visual. It is, however, important not to be dazzled or disoriented by the possibilities the computer offers. Selection among those possibilities should be guided by the communicative purposes and the proficiency goals of the foreign language curriculum."

The College Board, *Academic Preparation In Foreign Language* (1986), p. 101.

1. Content is meaningful and can be easily related to the lives of students.
2. Content includes language that is authentic and natural and based on real-life experiences.
3. Language is viewed as a medium for logical thinking processes and not as a collection of isolated words and phrases.
4. Content places primary emphasis on communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
5. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are introduced naturally as components of themes and functions.
6. Content is appropriate to the language needs, age levels and interests of students.
7. Activities are personalized and students are encouraged to express their own meanings in their own words.
8. Content becomes progressively more challenging as students advance in the language.
9. Information is current and accurate.
10. Content is not encyclopedic in quantity, but encourages students to seek other resources for additional information.
11. Cultural content is integrated throughout, reflecting multi-ethnic diversity within language groups and giving an accurate view of everyday life.

### Presentation criteria

All foreign language instructional materials should meet the following presentation criteria:

1. Materials foster positive self-images for all students and reduce student anxiety by using the following techniques:
  - presenting directions clearly to prevent frustration
  - promoting positive attitudes towards various cultures
  - offering activities designed to boost student confidence
2. The foreign language is the primary medium for learning and communication, with more and more foreign language appearing in basal materials as students advance.

3. Materials provide abundant practice in a range of contexts likely to be encountered in the foreign culture.

4. Concepts, functions and vocabulary are recycled throughout in a spiraling fashion; that is, they are introduced multiple times in various contexts, each time building on skills developed previously.

5. Themes and functions are sequenced in a meaningful and logical order.

6. Abundant authentic materials are integrated into content and activities.

### Foreign Language

All foreign language instructional materials should meet the following pedagogical criteria:

1. Activities are open-ended and encourage creative use of language and negotiated meaning in a variety of situations.

2. Activities call for higher-order thinking skills and reflection, not simply recollection of factual information.

3. All communication skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – are taught in an integrated fashion.

4. Ample opportunities are provided for active communication among students.

5. Activities include a variety of communication tasks appropriate to learning objectives.

6. Activities are designed to meet the needs of students with diverse learning styles, including a variety of individual, pair, small-group and class activities.

7. Activities are student-centered and require student involvement and responsibility.

8. An interdisciplinary approach is used with themes that encourage cross-disciplinary projects.

9. Teacher editions and manuals contain clear instructions for use of materials, along with model units. Programs for training teachers in use of materials are provided where appropriate.

10. Materials include ongoing assessments of all four communication skills, with emphasis on language proficiency.

### Student involvement

"...instruction should not be based on only the material at hand but should lead the student to other sources and formats of information. One source of information cannot possibly provide in-depth coverage of a subject without encouraging the student to seek information elsewhere. The material being examined should require that students be *active* constructors of knowledge not passive recipients of information."

South Carolina Department of Education,  
"South Carolina Criteria for Adoption of  
Instructional Materials," *Reference Hand-  
book for 1993 Evaluating and Rating  
Committees* (1993), p. 22.



### Technical guidelines

"The format and presentation of information should include illustrative material, like graphs, photographs, illustrations, tables or video segments, which are attractive and contribute to understanding of the subject matter presented. The layout and typography must contribute to understanding as well as to attractiveness and appeal. Technical qualities are important when considering all formats of instructional material. Both production criteria and information sources should be examined in light of the particular subject under consideration and the presentation format."

South Carolina Department of Education,  
"South Carolina Criteria for Adoption of  
Instructional Materials," *Reference Hand-  
book for 1993 Evaluating and Rating  
Committees* (1993), p. 22.

### Flexibility and variety

When it comes to adoption of instructional materials, foreign languages require flexibility and creativity so that a variety of materials are available for use in the classroom. It is through variety that students are provided with a classroom environment rich in language and culture.

This framework calls for a flexible approach to materials adoption on the state level. It is recommended that districts exhibit similar flexibility and allow their foreign language teachers the freedom and funding necessary to incorporate nontraditional and authentic supplementary materials into local programs.

For their part, teachers need to be on the lookout for quality instructional materials and submit possibilities to the state for consideration. After all, the state can not adopt a particular magazine, video program, computer program, etc., if it doesn't know about it. The best results will be achieved for our students if everyone takes initiative and we all work together.



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## Conclusion

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Foreign language education for every student in South Carolina is a tall order – one that won't be filled overnight. But with careful curriculum planning, cooperation among all members of the community, and a deep commitment to developing the language capabilities of our students, it can happen in the 1990s.

This framework provides guidelines for designing and implementing foreign language programs for students from kindergarten through twelfth grade. All guidelines are based on one primary language principle: to be effective – that is, to train students to function successfully in the global economy and in an increasingly diverse society – foreign language instruction must be communication-based. Only by learning to communicate in real-life situations will students reap the economic, social and cultural benefits inherent in the ability to speak a second language.

This framework also highlights a number of implications of expanded, communication-based foreign language education. These implications include the need for all of the following:

- more foreign language teachers
- ongoing, updated professional development opportunities for foreign language teachers
- extra-curricular cultural and language opportunities for students
- more non-traditional instructional materials, such as subscriptions to foreign newspapers and computer programs, for classroom use
- reorganization in high school foreign language programs to accommodate increasing numbers of students who begin foreign language study in elementary school
- collaboration between the State Department of Education and colleges and universities in designing teacher preparation programs and college placement tests

These issues must be addressed in the early stages of expanding foreign language education. As K-12 foreign language programs are put into place, other issues will become evident. Some questions that will need addressing in years to come are listed:

- With proficiency testing becoming increasingly important throughout the curriculum, what is the best way to

administer student assessments? Should statewide tests be developed or should testing be left to individual school districts?

- What is the best way to award high school credit for foreign language study? Should students receive a credit for every year of study completed or for every designated level of proficiency achieved?
- As South Carolina's school population becomes more culturally diverse, where does English as a Second Language fit? Should ESL students receive foreign language credits for ESL classes or for courses taken in their native languages?
- When foreign languages are taught to all students, what is the best way to group students so that all have a chance to develop proficiency? Is it possible to group students based on proficiency levels alone, regardless of grade level or academic standing?
- How can less commonly taught languages, such as Russian and Japanese, be incorporated into the curriculum?

How can students best be given the opportunity to study a third, and even a fourth, language?

The above questions will provide a basis for discussion when the time comes to write the next curriculum framework. But for now, this framework proposes significant changes in foreign language education that need immediate attention. One question is on a lot of people's minds: Who will make sure these changes take place? The answer is simple: All of us must do our part.

To bring about communication-based foreign language education for every student in every grade in South Carolina will require the collaborative efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, state personnel, business people, publishers, legislators and any other interested members of the community. We must all work together, diligently and creatively, in the planning, implementing and funding of foreign language programs. That's the only sure way to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

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*Photographs:*

*C. A. Johnson High School, Richland School District One*  
*Oak Grove Elementary School, Lexington School District One*

### S.C. Chamber of Commerce Education Study

In 1992, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey of member businesses "to identify what skills and competencies public school graduates in South Carolina need to have in order to be successful in the workplace." According to the Chamber's final report, this survey is "the first time that the South Carolina business community has collectively tried to voice its expectations for graduates of the public school system, grades K through 12." Following are the 37 workplace skills and competencies included in the survey, ranked in descending order from highest priority to lowest priority. (24 of the 37 skills and competencies were ranked as "high" or "very high" in priority.)

**Personal Qualities** – Someone who displays responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity and honesty.

1. Be honest and ethical in all their dealings
2. Believe in themselves and maintain a positive outlook
3. Try hard and persevere until they achieve their goal
4. Assess themselves accurately, set personal goals, monitor progress, and exhibit self-control
5. Be understanding, friendly, and polite in group settings

**Thinking Skills** – Someone who thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, conceptualizes, knows how to learn and how to reason.

1. Identify and weigh all options and choose the best alternative
2. Learn new skills
3. Recognize problems and develop plans of action to address them
4. Recognize relationships between people, ideas, or objects and use this information to solve a problem
5. Generate new ideas
6. Conceptualize and process information

**Information** – Someone who acquires and uses information.

1. Look for information they need
2. Interpret and communicate information to others
3. Organize information in a way that suits their needs
4. Use computers to process information

**Interpersonal** – Someone who works well with others.

1. Work to satisfy customer expectations
2. Be a good team player
3. Develop leadership skills and not be afraid to take the initiative
4. Appreciate and work well with men and women from diverse backgrounds
5. Teach others new skills
6. Know something of the art of negotiation

**Basic Skills** – Someone who reads, writes, listens, speaks, and performs math at a level that allows him or her to do their job well.

1. Communicate thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing
2. Perform basic math and apply it to everyday situations in the workplace
3. Organize ideas effectively and communicate orally
4. Listen and respond well to the words and non-verbal cues of others
5. Locate, understand, and interpret written information in a wide array of documents, graphs, etc.
6. Speak or understand a second language

**Resources** – someone who organizes, plans, and allocates resources.

1. Manage time wisely; prepare and follow schedules
2. Manage people in a way that maximizes their motivation and performance
3. Allocate and use materials or space efficiently
4. Use or prepare budgets, make forecasts, keep records, and make adjustments to meet objectives

**Technology** – someone who works well with a variety of technologies.

1. Select and use appropriate procedures, tools, or equipment – including computers, software, and related technology
2. Understand the overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment
3. Maintain and troubleshoot equipment

**Systems** – Someone who appreciates and understands how social, organizational, and technological systems work.

1. Understand how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operate effectively within them
2. Distinguish trends, predict consequences, diagnose performance, and correct malfunctions
3. Improve existing systems or design new ones